

REMARKS

Applicants acknowledge receipt of an Office Action dated November 9, 2007. In this response, Applicants have amended claim 10 to incorporate the subject matter of claim 1, and have amended claim 11 to incorporate the subject matter of claims 1 and 7. Applicants have cancelled claims 1, 7, and 18 without prejudice or disclaimer. Additionally, Applicants have amended claims 2-3, 12-13, and 17 to depend from claim 10, and have amended claims 8-9 to depend from claim 11. Applicants have added new claims 19-22 to depend from claim 11.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge, with appreciation, the PTO's indication, on page 5 of the Office Action, that claims 10 and 11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the subject matter of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In this response, Applicants have redrafted claims 10 and 11 in independent form, in each case incorporating all of the subject matter of the corresponding base claim(s). In view of these amendments, Applicants submit that claims 10 and 11 are now in *prima facie* allowable form. Additionally, claims 2-3, 12-13, and 17 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 10, and claims 8-9 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 11. In addition, new claims 19-22 have been added to depend from allowable claim 11. As such, claims 2-4, 8-9, 12-17, and 19-22 are also believed to be in *prima facie* allowable form at least as a result of their dependency from one of independent claims 10 or 11.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

On page 2 of the Office Action, the PTO has rejected claims 1-4, 7-9, and 12-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,461,499 to Hunter *et al.* In addition, on page 3 of the Office Action, the PTO has rejected claims 1-2 and 13-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication 4,463,975 to McCord. Applicants have cancelled claims 1, 7, and 18. Additionally, Applicants have amended claims 2-3, 12-13, and 17 to depend from allowable claim 10, and

have amended claims 8-9 to depend from allowable claim 11.

Consequently, the outstanding rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 are moot. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections under §102.

CONCLUSION


Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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